

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6177
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 4954

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CVIS, CSCE, PFOR, UR, US
SUBJECT: VISITS TO LOCAL OVIRS

1. CONSOFFS CALLED ON LOCAL OVIR OFFICES DURING TRIP APRIL 4
THROUGH APRIL 8 TO ODESSA AND KISHINEV AND MANAGED TO LEAVE WITH
OBVIOUSLY RELUCTANT OVIR OFFICIALS PORTIONS OF REPRESENTATION
LIST PERTAINING TO THEIR CITIES.

2. CHIEF OF ODESSA OVIR LISTENED IMPASSIVELY TO CONSOFFS' OPENING
REMARKS AND, WHEN CONSOFF TRIED TO HAND OVER LIST OF REFUSAL
CASES, STATED THAT HE COULD NOT DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS WITH CONSOFFS,
THAT THEY MUST ADDRESS THEM TO MFA. HE MAINTAINED SAME POSITION
EVEN AFTER CONSOFF TOLD HIM THAT MFA HAD BEEN INFORMED OF INTENTION
TO CALL ON ODESSA OFFICIALS. OVIR CHIEF WAS ACCOMPANIED THOROUGHOUT
BRIEF MEETING BY UNIFORMED, FEMALE MVD OFFICER WHO SEEMED TO BE
THERE TO TAKE NOTES, BUT DID NOT APPEAR TO TAKE ANY. OVIR
CHIEF DID NOT PHYSICALLY ACCEPT LIST, BUT ALLOWED IT TO BE
PLACED IN GENERAL PROXIMITY OF HIS HANDS AND DID NOT ATTEMPT
TO RETURN IT.

3. CHIEF OF KISHINEV OVIR WAS NOT IN OFFICE ON DAY CONSOFFS
STOPPED BY, SO THEY SETTLED FOR SECOND BEST, AN OVIR INSPECTOR
WHO WAS APPARENTLY MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT REGISTERING FOREIGNERS
THAN ISSUING EXIT VISAS. HE ACCEPTED LIST, TOLD CONSOFFS THAT HE
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COULD GIVE NO CONCRETE REPLY IMMEDIATELY, BUT SAID THAT HE WOULD
LOOK INTO MATTER. HE RECEIVED CONSOFFS IN COMPANY OF SECRETARY
AND SEEMED, IF ANYTHING, EVEN MORE RELIEVED THAN ODESSA
OVIR CHIEF WHEN THEY WENT BACK OUT THROUGH DOOR.

4. PRIOR TO TRIP, CONSOFF INFORMED MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION
OFFICIALS OF PLANS TO VISIT ODESSA AND KISHINEV OVIRS AND LEFT

NON-PAPER REQUESTING MFA ASSISTANCE IN FACILITATING VISITS. THERE WAS NO RESPONSE FROM MFA UNTIL AFTER CONSOFF DEPARTED FOR ODESSA, AT WHICH TIME MFA TOLD EMBASSY THAT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR LOCAL OVIRS TO RECEIVE HIM, SINCE HE HAD NOT SPECIFIED SUBJECTS WHICH HE WISHED TO DISCUSS. SECOND CHIEF, WHO DEPARTED FOLLOWING WEEK FOR TRIP TO DUSHAMBE, ACCORDINGLY SPECIFIED HE WISHED TO DISCUSS FAMILY REUNIFICATION MATTERS WHEN HE REQUESTED MFA ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING CALL ON LOCAL OVIR. HE WAS TOLD THAT SUCH MATTERS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH MFA AND NOT WITH LOCAL OVIR.

5. DEPARTMENT WILL RECOGNIZE THESE TYPICAL SOVIET TACTICS ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION MATTERS. MFA TELLS US THAT DECISIONS ARE RESPONSIBILITY OF LOCAL OVIRS OVER WHICH IT HAS NO CONTROL. LOCAL OVIRS TELL US SUBJECT MUST BE DISCUSSED WITH MFA. WE HAVE, NEVERTHELESS, FELT THAT CALLS ON LOCAL OVIRS WERE OF SOME VALUE IN GRADUALLY EXPANDING SCOPE AND ACCEPTABILITY OF EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS.

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